ELONGATED BOUNDARIES DETECTOR PARAMETERS OPTIMISATION BASED ON GENERATION OF SYNTHETIC DATA FROM AERIAL IMAGERY

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KEYWORDS

Boundaries detector, synthetic dataset, road markings detection, Optuna toolkit

ABSTRACT

The detector of elongated boundaries in the image, such as road marking lines, rails, etc., is an important component of the visual system of a highly automated vehicle (HAV). It is used by HAV to solve selflocalization problems or maintain the position inside the lane. Testing and optimisation of computer vision algorithms include preparing of the datasets that are usually labelled manually. Synthetic data of various kinds can reduce the complexity of algorithms development. In this paper we describe an approach to generation of synthetic data for testing elongated boundaries detectors that works with road images obtained from the cameras mounted on the HAV and converted to bird's eye view. This approach is based on cutting of raster aerial imagery and corresponding vector markup of target objects in the aerial imagery in various ways.

There is a class of elongated boundaries detectors, the first stage of which is the background suppression on the image and thus highlighting of the target lines. For them, we propose a method for creating a dataset consisting of images with a suppressed background, specifically, images of white elongated lines on a black background. The lines' shape will be similar to the target lines of the detector. With such a dataset you can tune the parameters, which affect stages of the algorithm, following the suppression of the background in the image.

In this paper we also consider elongated boundaries

detector. Its parameters fix the geometric model of the target lines. Automatic optimisation of the quality of

Communications of the ECMS, Volume 36, Issue 1, Proceedings, ©ECMS Ibrahim A. Hameed, Agus Hasan, Saleh Abdel-Afou Alaliyat (Editors) 2022 ISBN: 978-3-937436-77-7/978-3-937436-76-0(CD) ISSN 2522-2414 such a detector is possible using the Optuna toolkit, but it requires a large dataset. In this paper, we propose an approach to optimisation of the detector on a synthetic dataset. The effectiveness of this approach is confirmed by testing on real data.

INTRODUCTION

The detector of elongated boundaries in the images of the road is an important component of the visual system of a highly automated vehicle (HAV). The elongated boundaries in the images of the road can be, for example, road markings lanes, traffic-way borders, tram tracks, etc. (see fig. 1).

The information about the boundaries location in the image are necessary to solve the problems such as maprelative localization of the HAV (Ziegler et al. 2014; Shipitko and Grigoryev 2018), maintaining the position of the HAV inside the lane (Wang et al. 2005) or lane departure warnings (Jung and Kelber 2004; Hsiao et al.

There are various approaches to the detecting elongated boundaries in the world. Approaches based on machine learning methods: such as structural forest (Xiao et al. 2016), convolutional neural networks (Teplyakov et al. 2021), recurrent neural networks (Zheng et al. 2020), combinations of different types of neural networks (Dong et al. 2021; Zhang et al. 2021), neural networks which analyze not only input image but also use engineering features (Erlygin and Teplyakov 2021). Approaches based on classical image processing methods: for example, image background suppression in order to highlight target lines and then approximation of the highlighted lines by polylines using the Hough transform (Jang et al. 2014) or the window Hough transform (Panfilova and Kunina 2020). The Canny edge detector (Canny 1986) or other edge detectors can also be used to hightlight target lines (Tropin et al. 2019; Mousavi et al. 2019), in combination of probabilistic Hough transform (Hou et al. 2016; Li et al. 2016) or the least squares method (Yoo et al. 2013), applied for polyline approximation.



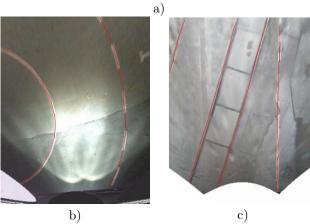


Fig. 1: Examples of elongated boundaries in the images of the roads: a) colour highlights solid and dash-lines, traffic-way borders and safety islands, b) bird's eye view image, colour highlight solid and dash lines, c) bird's eye view image, colour highlights tram tracks and dash-lines

A dataset, usually being markuped manually, is required in order to tune the parameters and evaluate the quality of the detector, like of any other computer vision algorithm. There are datasets of roads' images obtained by a camera mounted on a vehicle: TuSimple (https://github.com/TuSimple/tusimple-benchmark), CalTech (http://www.mohamedaly.info/research/lane-detection), CuLane (Pan et al. 2018), but they are not suitable for the detectors which input data is bird's eye view image. They do not contain parameters of cameras that can be used to convert images to bird's eye view. Moreover, when HAV is launched at a certain territory, it is necessary to tune detector parameters based on data as close as possible to real one, that is, images of the area on which the HAV will move.

In this article we will present method of generating synthetic datasets consisting of bird's eye view images of the road. For the detectors, first step of which is background suppression, we propose a dataset of drawn white road marking lines on a black background. To show the practical applicability the elongated boundaries detector (Panfilova and Kunina 2020) will be optimised on the synthetic data. Than the quality of optimised parameters will be checked on a real data.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: section

II presents the algorithms of generation of synthetic dataset of two types, section III shows the practical applicability of synthetic datasets and section IV summarises the results.

SYNTHETIC DATASETS GENERATION

In this section we will present the algorithms for creating synthetic datasets of two types: aerial imagery synthetic dataset (see fig. 3) and drawn road markings synthetic dataset (see fig. 4). These datasets will be based on a raster aerial imagery (see fig. 2a) and its vector markup of target objects (see fig. 2b).

Aerial imagery synthetic dataset

This type of a dataset consists of bird's eye view images of the road with a user-specified image resolution. The line length as well as the total length of all lines in the image are limited from below. Such a dataset can be used to train and test elongated boundaries detectors that work with bird's eye view images.

Further, we will formulate the precise statement of the problem and present its solution.

Problem statement

Let we have

- Raster aerial imagery $\mathbf{I_{map}}$ size of $\mathbf{w_{map}}$ by $\mathbf{h_{map}}$
- \bullet Its markup of detector target lines (such as road markings lanes, trails, etc.) $\bf VectMarkup_{map}$
- Image resolution number pixels per metre is ppm_{map}

It is required to create a dataset (see fig. 3) such as:

- Bird's eye view images of the roads
- Image size is \mathbf{w} by \mathbf{h}
- Result image resolution is ppm_{im}
- The pixel length of each line is greater than the threshold $\mathbf{thr_{line}}$
- \bullet The total pixel length of all lines in the image is greater than the threshold ${\bf thr_{lines}}$

Algorithm of aerial imagery synthetic dataset generation

The main idea of the algorithm is to copy regions on the aerial imagery in different positions and for each position determine and save markup lines which appears in the region. The region and the obtained markup must be scaled to satisfy the requirements of result images in the datset. To obtain different positions of the region, the starting point on the aerial imagery is randomly selected, and then the region is shifted horizontally, vertically, and rotated around its centre with fixed deltas. You can see the pseudocode of this algorithm below (Algorithm 1).

The result of the algorithm 1

To obtain the aerial imagery synthetic dataset, we got an aerial imagery of a closed area "Kalibr", Moscow, Russia (a certain territory used for autonomous vehicle testing) size of $w_{map} = 6475$ by $h_{map} = 7098$

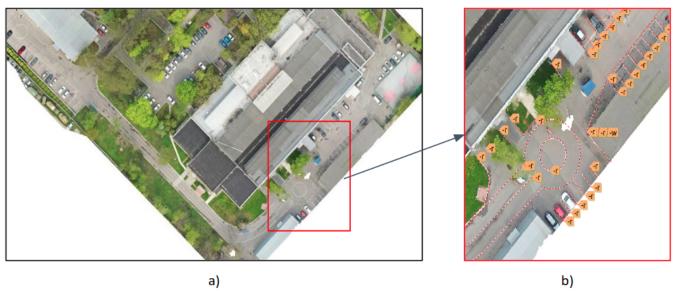


Fig. 2: a) Fragment of aerial imagery. b) Markup of target lines in the aerial imagery fragment.

Algorithm 1 Generation of aerial imagery synthetic dataset

```
Input: I_{map}, VectMarkup_{map}, ppm_{map}, w, h, ppm_{im}, sh_x, sh_y, \Delta \alpha, thr_{line}, thr_{line}, output\_path
```

Output: Set of bird's eye view images size of w by h at a resolution ppm_{im} and corresponded them files of target lines markup in the $output_path$ directory

```
1: scale\_f \leftarrow \frac{ppm_{map}}{ppm_{im}}
   W_w \leftarrow w * scale_f; W_h \leftarrow h * scale_f
    x \leftarrow random(0; W_w); y \leftarrow random(0, W_y)
     ScaleParams(sh_x \ sh_y, thr_{line}, thr_{lines}, scale\_f)
     while x < w_{map} - 2 * W_w do
5:
        while y < h_{map} - 2 * W_h do
6:
7:
           I_{wind} \leftarrow \text{region on } I_{map} \text{ with top left coordinate } (x,y) \text{ size of } 2W_w \times 2W_h
           VectMarkup_{wind} \leftarrow \text{objects in } VectMarkup_{map}, \text{ which appear in } I_{wind} \text{ and which length } > thr_{line}
8:
           for i \leqslant \frac{360^{\circ}}{\Delta \alpha} do
9:
              \alpha = i * \Delta \alpha
10:
               I_{turn} \leftarrow Turn(\alpha, x + W_w, y + W_h, I_{wind}) - rotation around point (x + W_w, y + W_h) by \alpha
11:
              VectMarkup_{turn} \leftarrow Turn(\alpha, x + W_w, y + W_h, VectMarkup_{wind})
12:
              I_{res} \leftarrow \text{region on } I_{turn} \text{ with top left coordinate } (x + \frac{W_w}{2}, y + \frac{W_h}{2}) \text{ size of } W_w \times W_h
13:
              VectMarkup_{res} \leftarrow \text{objects in } VectMarkup_{turn}, \text{ which appear in } I_{res}
14:
              sum\ length \leftarrow \mathbf{SumLen}(VectMarkup_{res})
15:
              if sum \ length < thr_{lines} then
16:
                  continue
17:
              end if
18:
              \mathbf{Scale}(I_{res}, VectMarkup_{res}, \frac{1}{scale-f})
19:
              Save(I_{res}, VectMarkup_{res}, output path)
20:
21:
           end for
22:
           y = y + sh_y
        end while
23:
        x = x + sh_x
24:
25: end while
```

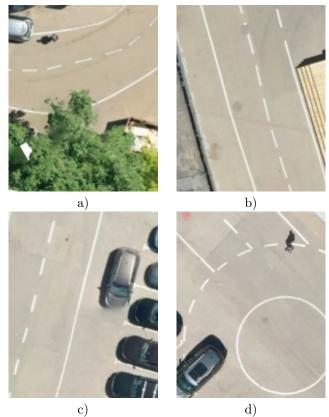


Fig. 3: Examples of images from aerial imagery dataset

pixels with image resolution $ppm_{map}=14.5785$. Required image parameters in the dataset are w=320, h=400, $ppm_{im}=60$. The given algorithm parameters are $sh_x=160$, $sh_y=200$, $\Delta\alpha=60^\circ$, $thr_{line}=30$ pixels, $thr_{lines}=120$ pixels. As a result we got dataset consisted of 5337 images. You can see the images examples of the resulting dataset in fig. 3, the full dataset is available at https://zenodo.org/record/6054552.

Drawn road markings synthetic dataset

This type of a dataset consists of images like white elongated lines in the road markings shape on the black background. As in previous dataset type the image resolution set by user. The line length and the total line lengths are limited from below. We can also set line thickness and the degree of image blur. Such a dateset can be used only for the road lines detectors, first step of which is background suppression. So the user can optimise the parameters that correspond the detector's steps after background suppression.

Further we will formulate the precise statement of the problem and present its solution.

Problem statement

Let us have:

- Vector marking of the detector target lines on the aerial imagery size of $\mathbf{w_{map}}$ by $\mathbf{h_{map}}$ $\mathbf{VectMarkup_{map}}$. We will call this entity a \mathbf{vector} map of an aerial imagery.
- Aerial imagery resolution number of pixels per meter is $\mathbf{ppm_{map}}$

It is required to create a dataset such as:

- The images of white lines on a black background (see fig. 4). The lines are geometrically shaped as the target lines of the detector.
- Line thickness $\mathbf{thk_{line}}$
- Image size is \mathbf{w} by \mathbf{h}
- Image resolution is $\mathbf{ppm_{im}}$
- Measure of lines blurring by Gaussian kernel size of $\mathbf{kernel_w}$ by $\mathbf{kernel_h}$ set by sigma equal to $\mathbf{sigma_x} = \mathbf{sigma_v} = \mathbf{sigma}$

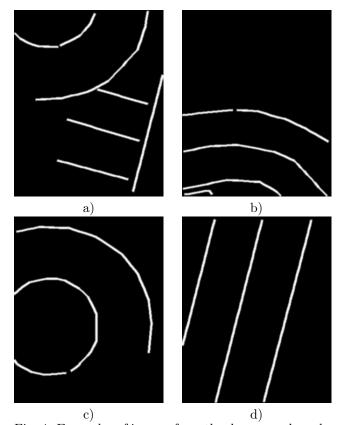


Fig. 4: Examples of images from the drawn road markings synthetic dataset

 $Algorithm \ of \ drawn \ road \ markings \ synthetic \ dataset$ generation

The main idea of the algorithm is to consider different positions of the region on the vector map of the aerial imagery. All objects of the vector map that appear into the fixed region are drawn on a black image of a given size with a certain line thickness and then blurred with a Gaussian window. To obtain different window positions, the starting point on the map is randomly selected, and then the region is shifted horizontally, vertically, and rotated around region centre by fixed deltas. You can see the pseudocode of this algorithm below (Algorithm 2).

The result of the algorithm 2

To obtain synthetic dataset we took the same as for the first algorithm aerial imagery of closed territory "Kalibr". So parameters of the aerial imagery are

Algorithm 2 Generation of drawn road markings synthetic dataset

```
Input: VectMarkup_{map}, ppm_{map}, w, h, ppm_{im}, sh_x, sh_y, \Delta \alpha, thr_{line}, thr_{line}, thk_{line}, kernel_w, kernel_h, sigma, output\_path
```

Output: Set of images of white lines on a black background and corresponded them files of target lines markup in the output path directory

```
scale\_f = \frac{ppm_{map}}{ppm_{im}}
     W_w \leftarrow w * scale\_f; W_h \leftarrow h * scale\_f
     x \leftarrow random(0; W_w); y \leftarrow random(0, W_w)
     ScaleParams(sh_x \ sh_y, thr_{line}, thr_{lines}, scale\_f)
4:
     while x < w_{map} - 2 * W_w do
5:
        while y < h_{map} - 2 * W_h do
6:
           I_{wind} \leftarrow \text{region with top left coordinate } (x, y) \text{ size of } 2W_w \times 2W_h
7:
8:
           VectMarkup_{wind} \leftarrow \text{objects in } VectMarkup_{map}, \text{ which appear in } I_{wind} \text{ and which length } > thr_{line}
           for i \leqslant \frac{360^{\circ}}{\Delta \alpha} do
9:
              \alpha = i * \Delta \alpha
10:
              VectMarkup_{turn} \leftarrow Turn(\alpha, x + W_w, y + W_h, VectMarkup_{wind}) - rotation around (x + W_w, y + W_h)
11:
              I_{turn} \leftarrow \text{region with top left coordinate } (x + \frac{W_w}{2}, y + \frac{W_h}{2}) \text{ size of } W_w \times W_h
12:
              VectMarkup_{res} \leftarrow \text{objects in } VectMarkup_{turn}, \text{ which appear in } I_{turn}
13:
              sum\ length \leftarrow \mathbf{SumLen}(VectMarkup_{res})
14:
15:
              if sum \ length < thr_{lines} then
                 continue
16:
17:
              end if
              \mathbf{Scale}(VectMarkup_{res}, \frac{1}{scale-f})
18:
              I_{res} \leftarrow 3-channel RGB image size of w by h filled with (0,0,0) pixels – black colour
19:
              clr \leftarrow (255, 255, 255) – set white colour
20:
              \mathbf{Draw}(I_{res}, VectMarkup_{res}, thk_{line}, clr)
21:
22:
              GaussianBlur(I_{res}, kernel_w, kernel_h, sigma)
23:
              Save(I_{res}, VectMarkup_{res}, output path)
24:
           end for
25:
           y = y + sh_y
26:
        end while
        x = x + sh_x
27:
28: end while
```

the same. The required properties of the image are $w=320,\ h=400,\ ppm_{im}=60.$ The given algorithm parameters are $sh_x=320,\ sh_y=400,\ \Delta\alpha=120,\ thk_{line}=5,\ kernel_x=kernel_y=7,\ sigma=1,\ thr_{line}=30$ pixels, $thr_{lines}=120$ pixels. As a result we got a dataset consisted of 661 images. The images example you can find in the figure 4. The full dataset is avalaible at https://zenodo.org/record/6054552.

EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

Elongated boundaries detector

In order to test the practical applicability of the synthetic dataset, we considered the elongated boundaries detector from the article (Panfilova and Kunina 2020). This detector accepts as input a bird's eye view image.

Its first stage is the suppression of the background of the image and thus the highlighting of the target lines. The second stage is the approximation of the highlighted lines by polylines and filtration them by length. The quality of this algorithm was tested on the open dataset (see Fig. 3 (a)) presented in the proceedings (Panfilova et al. 2021). The dataset consists of road images from the the closed territory "Kalibr", Moscow, Russia, files with target lines markup and the parameters of the camera on which the dataset was collected. Knowing the camera's parameters we can convert images to bird's eye view (see fig. 5). The algorithm parameters were tuned by an expert. The found line in the image was considered TP if its segments were close enough to the target line and coincided with the target

line direction (see proceedings (Panfilova et al. 2021) for a more detailed description of the quality metrics). Precision of the algorithm is 0.43, recall - 0.73, F-score - 0.54.

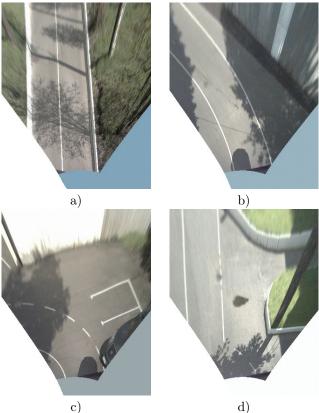


Fig. 5: Examples of images from the open dataset (Panfilova et al. 2021) converted to bird's eye view

Optuna optimisation using synthetic dataset.

In the second section we presented two synthetic datasets: aerial imagery (see fig. 3) and drawn road markings (see fig. 4). In order to optimise the detector parameters and evaluate the detector we merged these datasets together and randomly split merged data into train and evaluation sub-samplings. Train sub-sampling consists of 1300 images: 1000 images of aerial imagery dataset and 300 images of drawn markings line dataset. Test sub-sampling consists of 4998 images: 4337 images of aerial imagery dataset and 661 images of drawn road markings dataset.

To optimise the detector parameters we used Optuna toolkit (Akiba et al. 2019). It allows to optimise model based algorithms like the detector (Panfilova and Kunina 2020). The target value was F-score. We ran the optimisation of the detector on the train subsampling of the synthetic dataset 6 times to get the F-score distribution with randomly chosen starting parameters and with best parameters after optimisation. The distributions were calculated for the train and test sub-samplings of synthetic dataset and for the open dataset of real data obtained from the same territory as aerial imagery for the synthetic dataset (Panfilova et al. 2021). As a result we got the quality of the detector

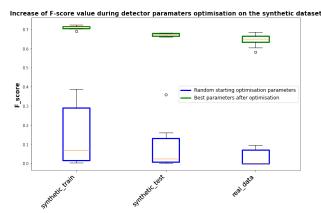


Fig. 6: Boxplot of F-score distribution

on the real data with optimised parameters on average 0.54 higher than the quality of one with randomly chosen starting parameters for optimisation process. You can see the visualisation of the obtained results in the fig. 6.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we proposed the approach to generation of synthetic datasets of two types: aerial imagery dataset (see fig. 3) and drawn road markings on a black background dataset (see fig. 4). The main advantage of this method is that you only need aerial imagery and you have to markup the target lines on it just once. The aerial imagery dataset intended to be used for train and test elongated boundaries detectors which input image is a bird's eye view image of the road. The drawn markings dataset was proposed for training the detectors first stage of which is background suppression and whose input image is also a bird's eye view image of the road. In this case you will be able to optimise not all detector's parameters but those that correspond the stages followed by the background suppression. The generated sythetic datasets from the aerial imagery of the "Kalibr", Moscow, Russia are available at https://zenodo.org/record/6054552.

Moreover, we showed the practical applicability of the synthetic datasets. Considering the elongated boundaries detector from the proceedings (Panfilova and Kunina 2020), we optimised it on the train part of synthetic dataset and show the quality gain on a real data. Thus, using synthetic data can reduce time of data collecting and it markup and gives acceptable detector quality on a real data.

Further improvement of the synthetic data generation may be focused on simulating different weather conditions, like puddles, shadows, wet paved road and etc.

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